

GUIDING LIGHT MISSIONTake a moment. Take action. lifeonthestreet.org

Times

You are helping neighbors from all walks of life

Like many teenagers, Rick's curiosity with alcohol began when he was in high school, taking his first drink at seventeen. And like many kids who start drinking at a young age, it didn't take long for Rick's casual drinking to turn into an addiction to alcohol.

For many years, Rick lived as a functioning alcoholic—holding down a good job in the trucking business as both a driver and manager. But a few years ago, his dependence upon alcohol caught up with him and took away the security of comfort in his job, his home and his self-esteem.

Rick found himself on the streets, holding signs asking for money, mainly to support his

Read more about Rick inside >



I know the Lord has a purpose for me. And I'm doing this for my future.



Welcoming change to transform lives

Dear Friend,

For 80 years, Guiding Light Mission has served as a source of hope for thousands of people in the Grand Rapids area. Our culture and history are rich, and for that, we are thankful. But just as our society has changed in the past eight decades, we've recognized our need to change with it to better meet the needs of people in our community in crisis.

With handfuls of men who live day-to-day on the streets, we are doing what we can to get them service and bring them inside. If someone comes to us with a medical condition, the Mission pays for his medication; we try to pull out all the stops for these men.

If a man is in need of work, he gets help through our new Education and Job Readiness program. Right now, we have several men attending the community college and they encourage their peers to join them. One program we have provides this education at no cost if the participant comes from a low poverty zip code, which we are.

In addition, we have increased the accountability of men in our shelter. We explain the expectations to each person who comes to our doors for help and these improvements have been met with great appreciation. More importantly, our approach to innovative personal and social development is transforming lives.

By providing immediate solutions and not just prolonging in-depth help, I'm happy to report that the length of stay for men in emergency shelter has shortened to just 14 days!

Having a new outlook on how to make things run smoothly for the Mission has helped us improve tremendously. Men are trading housing and job leads, and are cheerleading and applauding each other.

I've envisioned Guiding Light getting to this point, but now that it's here, it's truly a gift from God. I want to thank you for partnering with us year after year. We truly couldn't help our community without your generosity.

Please continue to stand with us as we provide a healing experience for every individual we meet and treat them with the dignity and respect that we believe Jesus would have us demonstrate.

Stuart

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You are helping neighbors... can't from cover

drinking. At night, he slept on an old mattress or cardboard underneath a bridge not far from the doors of Guiding Light Mission.

One especially cold night while camping out under the bridge, Rick's feet became frostbitten. "It was very painful," Rick explains and even resulted in losing parts of two of his toes.

Perhaps by God's providence, the physical suffering was what Rick had to face to ultimately find the help he so desperately needed. And while being treated at a nearby hospital, the staff directed Rick to Guiding Light Mission.

Rick is now making the most of the opportunity at Guiding Light Mission. Not only is he making tremendous strides in his recovery to alcohol addiction, he is involved in our new Education and Job Readiness program.

Today, with the support and encouragement of staff members and other guests at Guiding Light Mission, Rick's goal is to obtain his GED and get back into the trucking business. He has every intention of creating a better life for himself, sharing, "I know the Lord has a purpose for me. And I'm doing this for my future."



While your generosity has allowed Rick to find the support and resources he's needed for recovery, he knows that it is up to him to continue the work.

Thank you for giving him a second chance to succeed, not only professionally, but as a new man filled with hope, integrity and the tools he needs to leave his life of alcoholism behind forever.

Mission needs...

Basic Needs:

- NIV Bibles
- Christian music CDs
- Christian reading materials
- Men's briefs
- Socks
- Men's jeans & khaki pants (sizes 30–50)
- Men's short sleeved shirts (sizes S–XXXL)
- Bath towels & washcloths
- Men's deodorant
- Toothpaste & toothbrushes
- Hair combs
- Shampoo
- Shaving cream

- Disposable razors
- Bar soap
- Vinyl or plastic covered twin mattresses
- Vinyl or plastic covered pillows
- Spiral notebooks

Specialty Needs:

- Wet-dry vac
- 12 passenger van
- Projector screen (for conference room)
- Projector & screen (for chapel)
- Desk lamps
- Physician's scale

Pantry:

- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Canned tuna
- Boxed cereal
- Dry or canned milk
- Butter or margarine
- Cheese
- Pasta
- Bread
- Frozen meats
- Non-frozen desserts

Alumni Move Kits:

- Dishes (set of 4 or 6)
- Silverware (set of 4 or 6)
- Glasses
- Coffee mugs

- Coffee pot
- Bed sheets
- Comforter covers
- Pillows
- Mattresses
- Bath & hand towels
- Toaster
- Toaster oven

Volunteers:

- Office assistant
- Social workers
- Nutritionists
- Mentors
- Counselors
- Teachers
- Exercise educators



Upcoming event

14th annual golf outing

Mark your calendars for Monday, June 13 as we host our 14th Annual Golf Outing at Deer Run Golf Course in Lowell, Michigan. This exciting day of fun and fellowship starts at 1 p.m. and will last until 6 p.m.

The goal of the Annual Golf Scramble is to support the START (Spiritual Truth And Recovery Training)

addiction recovery program for men in addition to all emergency services at Guiding Light Mission.

Each golfer will enjoy 18 holes of golf with cart in a shotgun golf scramble format including a complimentary snack and beverage cart. Lunch, dinner and an appreciation gift are also included.

For more information or to sign up today, simply contact Darla Davis at Guiding Light Mission at (616) 451-0236 or email her at volunteer@lifeonthestreet.org. We look forward to seeing you on the links!

Memorial & in honor of gifts given in memory or for a special occasion

If you would like to give a gift in memory of a loved one who has passed away, or in honor of a special occasion, please mail your gift and the name of the person(s) being remembered or honored to:

Guiding Light Mission • 255 S. Division • Grand Rapids, MI 49503

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Robert Bloem
Marvin Bolt
Gladys Bolt
Sondra Breen
Ronald Brooks
Howard Bultema
Lyman Clark
Bill Cook
Henry DeBoer
Richard DeBoer
Karen S. Denis
Sharon Dunlop
Matt Eberlein
Alice Feenstra
Donald Fish
Alleen Fowler
Jerry Friesema

Myrt Gentry
Francis Good
Melvin Haggai
Fredrick Hall
Ruth Hall
Jean Hasenauer
Daryl Jones
William Koning
John Kortman
John Kuipers
Josephine Lachniet
Marion Lawrence
Gertrude Moltmaker
Helen Nietling
Gerben Schreiber
Sylvia Schreiber
Barbara Schrimp
Albert Schuirtema

Margaret Sevensma
Scott Allen Steffes
Howard Strojan
Sophie Tomasunas
Anne Tubergen
Gerard Tubergen
Kristin VanDenBosch
Eleanor VanderHoek
Steven VanderJagt
Fritz Wise
Marshall York
Steven Zank

IN HONOR OF GIFTS

Mrs. Vincent Bonczyk
Timothy Dean
Julie DeLanoy

Donald Duba
Fred & Mary Jo Endsley
Wayne & Win Frazee
Lisa Lach
Les & Carole Meyering
Marvin Moll
Preston Mulligan
Sherry Peterson
David Raymond
Raymond Roberts Jr.
Al Snoeyink
Henry Visser
Roy & Joan Visser
Jill Walton
Richard & Joyce Zaagman

A kind word from our community

Thanks to your generosity, many individuals receive care from Guiding Light Mission beyond what you might consider typical "mission services" like food or shelter. We recently received a kind note from a nurse at Saint Mary's Health Care. It's addressed to friends like you as much as it is to us.

"Stuart, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for assisting us in helping Leo. We understand that each client is different and each case presents its own challenges. Providing continued care for patients with none or limited resources remains a challenge and I anticipate with the new health care bills that this will only escalate.

So, again, thank you so much. Leo stopped by today, he was looking for mail from his sister. He looks real good and the wound care nurse is pleased with his healing progress."

*Roberta Wilkes MSN RN CNL
Saint Mary's Health Care*

Empowerment through education & job readiness programs

Throughout the past year, Guiding Light Mission has been evolving its emergency shelter into a program of opportunities for men. “We are beginning to use words like Justice, Empowerment, Accountability, and Reconciliation,” says Stuart Ray, Executive Director. “We are about empowerment, and to back that up, beginning Monday, January 10, 2011 we are offering an Education and Job Readiness Program.”

The Education and Job Readiness program is in collaboration with staff from Grand Rapids Community College. The program is an opportunity available to the men in the emergency shelter to obtain their GED if they do not have a high school diploma. The other side is the Job Readiness Program that will guide men to the career best suited for them, and assist them with their training. Computer classes, tutors and educators are all part of the program.

Mike, a member of our START Program, is working on his GED through Guiding Light Mission. “It means a lot for me to get my GED. I have been working on my own in construction and as a handyman. I’m looking forward to obtaining employment as an automotive painter. I’m a certified automotive painter and by obtaining my GED, I’m hoping to get a job in that field. I’m also looking to make my family proud of this accomplishment.”



Guiding Light Mission is helping men move beyond the homeless shelter by providing opportunities to obtain their GED, as well as learn computer and job searching skills.

Recognizing the challenges in obtaining employment, Guiding Light Mission wants to assist those interested in obtaining their GED, learning computer skills, or even discovering what career may suit them best. We expect anywhere from 10–20 men to utilize the service.

“This new program aligns nicely with the relationship we have with Booth Family Services,” said Stuart P. Ray. “We can offer opportunities for housing, employment and training skills. This is the beginning as we are looking at other opportunities to take care of our neighbors.”

Guiding Light Mission also collaborates with:

- Heartside Ministries
- Booth Family Services
- St. Mary’s Community Reinvestment Committee
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Network 180’s Project Get Connected
- Coalition to End Homelessness

We’d also like to thank the Cook Foundation and Christian Evangelical Trust for supporting The Education and Job Readiness program through grants.

You helped him find what he always needed



Tom believes that anything is possible with God, “because He cares and He wants me to do well.”

Something had been missing in Tom’s life since he was young. Taking his first drink at twelve years old, Tom was misled into thinking the void he felt could be filled with the temporary fix he received from alcohol.

Originally from New York, Tom struggled with his addiction for years, moving from place to place, ending up in a shelter in Ann Arbor. While staying overnight, Tom heard about a “place in

Grand Rapids that was a long-term religious-based shelter,” and felt it was the perfect fit.

Ready for positive change in his life, Tom came to Grand Rapids. “I chose to come here, because I had a lot of questions about God. I felt like that might be the missing link to my recovery,” Tom explains.

As Tom has grown in his understanding of God’s guidance and provision, he is gaining faith that he can overcome his struggles. With a committed support system in place, Tom is making progress and regaining control of his future.

“Without the old people, places, and things” that were a negative influence in Tom’s life, he is finally able to fully concentrate on his own well-being.

Since being at the Guiding Light Rescue Mission, Tom has decided to “get back into the cooking again” and has “re-established my relationship with my daughter. She’s forgiven me,” he expresses. Tom believes that anything is possible with God, “because He cares and He wants me to do well.”

“I just spoke to my Father for the first time in about a year,” Tom continues. “Even though he can’t see me, he says I sound so much different.”

And Tom is different. Thanks to you, he’s found what he’s always been looking for, but just wasn’t sure how to find. He has the support of his family and a personal faith from which he now draws strength. As Tom recites to himself daily: “life is uncertain, death is for sure, sin is the cause, Christ is the cure.”

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Our Mission

Guiding Light Mission exists to create a healing experience that allows individuals to discover a new life in Christ. We expect re-engagement in community. We provide food and shelter to all and resources to men that support their social, physical, spiritual, and intellectual needs.

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